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CENTRE GETS ONE MONTH ON PERMANENT COMMISSION

A bench headed by Justices D Y Chandrachud said the Centre must comply with all its directions given in its Feb 17 verdict

GOVT HAD SOUGHT SIX MONTHS' TIME

The Central Govt had sought six months to implement the Supreme Court verdict in view of the coronavirus pandemic. In its landmark verdict, the apex court had ordered that women officers in the Army be granted permanent commission and command postings. The court had also asked the Defence Ministry to fully implement its order within three months

FORMAL GOVT ORDER LIKELY SOON

The Centre told the bench that decision-making on the issue is at the final stage and only formal orders remain to be issued. At present, women officers can serve for 10 to 14 years in the Short Service Commission. A permanent commission will allow these officers to serve in the army till the age of retirement

1,653

NO. OF WOMEN OFFICERS IN THE ARMY, COMPLETING 4% OF TOTAL STRENGTH



Combo satellite images of the Galwan Valley along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh show Monday's Chinese pullback | AP

Joint vetting part of plan after each pullback phase

US military will continue to stand strong with allies like India: WH

MAYANK SINGH AND PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

INDIA and China will jointly confirm the compliance of disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, which began on Monday, after the first phase is complete. The militaries of India and China began thinning their troops and moving their vehicles back from some points in Eastern Ladakh after Special Representatives of both sides - National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi - talked to each other on Sunday. "Joint verification of re-located camps will be done to see that the land form is restored," an Army officer said. It means that the two sides will be physically present to confirm compliance as per the agreements so as to build trust, the officer added.

Disengagement with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in China started on Monday with

rearward movement of PLA vehicles seen in the general area of Galwan (Patrolling Point-14 and 15), Gogra Post (Patrolling Point 17A) and Hot Springs. "The PLA was seen removing tents and structures at Patrolling Point-14", but there was no clear word on the depth of the pullback. However, stand-off continues at points like Finger-4 and Dopsang.

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviewed the status of border infrastructure with DG-Border Roads Lt Gen Harpal Singh. Forward connectivity to border areas was reviewed, the Defence Ministry said in a press release.

With the situation in ferment, the US did some muscle-flexing by deploying two aircraft carriers in the disputed South China Sea in response to the recent Chinese aggression on multiple fronts, including India and Bhutan.

White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows said: "The message is clear. We are not going



LOOKING AT BANNING CHINA APPS: POMPEO

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the US is 'certainly looking' at banning Chinese social media apps like TikTok. "I do not want to get out in front of President Trump, but it is something we are looking at," he said | PTI

to stand by and let China or anyone else take the reins in terms of being the most powerful, dominant force, whether it is in that region or over here. Our military might stands strong and will continue to stand strong, whether it is in relationship to a conflict between India and China or anywhere else."

70% OF ACTIVE CASES BY JUNE-END WERE FROM JUST FIVE STATES

SANA SHAKIL & KUMAR VIKRAM @ New Delhi

THE Covid-19 pandemic, while spreading across the country in June when Unlock 1.0 was rolled out, showed a pattern of concentrating in just a few states, an analysis of the June data by The New Indian Express has found.

On June 1, five states — Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh — together reported nearly 63% of the total active Covid-19 cases in the country. By the end of June, the percentage had gone up to 70%.

One pattern that emerges from the June data is that in all the five states, the number of active cases either doubled or went up by more than that. While in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh it went up by seven times, in Tamil Nadu it was close to four times. (See graphic 1)

Another pattern that emerges from the June data is that the number of daily confirmed cases rose sharply in the second half of the month.

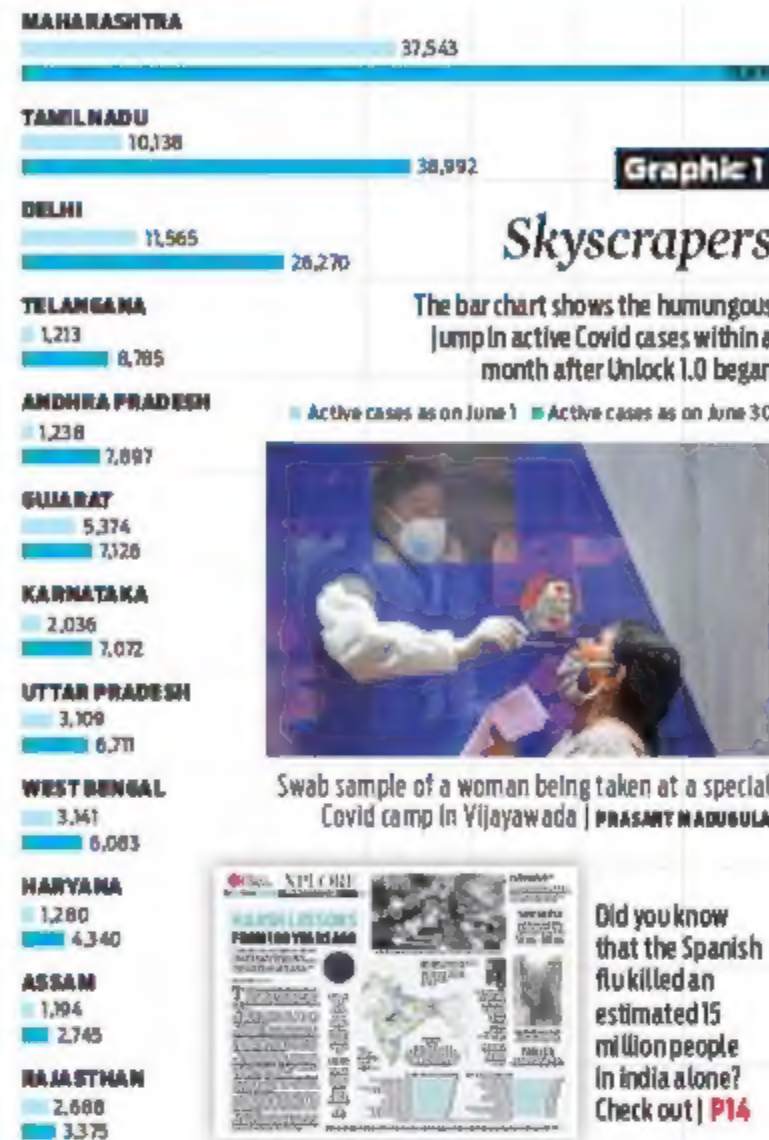
It is not clear if this was the result of increased testing, as in the case of Delhi and Andhra Pradesh. But after June 8, Unlock 1.0 was further relaxed when places of worship, shopping malls, restaurants and hotels were reopened.

Maharashtra

It started with close to 70,013 confirmed cases at the beginning of June and the tally of total cases by the month-end was 1,74,761. Till mid-June, the state had about 3,000 new cases daily, except on June 15 and 16. But in the latter half of the month, the number of daily cases started increasing, hitting a peak of 6,388 on June 27.

From 37,543 active cases in the beginning of the month, the state doubled its tally with as many as 75,979 active cases by the end of the month. In terms of total cases, the state recorded nearly 150% increase. Only two districts, Mumbai and Pune, reported over 62% of all cases in the state.

CONTINUED ON: P6



Reduce testing delays, focus on clusters, says Central team

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE delay in declaring Covid-19 test results owing to the huge pile-up of samples in Karnataka seems to have caught the attention of the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry. A Central team, which is reviewing the Covid-19 situation in Karnataka, told Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Tuesday that the delay needs to be reduced to effectively contain the spread of the Coronavirus.

The team, comprising Arti Ahuja, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and Dr P Raveendran, Director, Emergency Medical Response Centre, held discussions with the CM, other ministers and officials on Karnataka's strengths and weaknesses in the battle against the pandemic. Armed with a district-wise detailed report on epidemiology, source transmission, nature of spread, etc., the team, while lauding Karnataka's door-to-door survey to identify vulnerable persons, has asked for more testing, especially in containment zones.

"The priority of the government should be to save lives and to provide treatment. The guidelines for containment



With Covid-19 cases spiking, shopkeepers on Ulital Main Road have voluntarily downed their shutters on Tuesday | VINOD KUMAR Y



zones should be strictly followed," the Central team is said to have suggested. While apprising the team about Karnataka's preparedness, the State Government has set itself a deadline of August 15 to set up high-flow oxygen systems in about 15,000 district and taluk government hospitals. For this, Rs 109.10 crore has been set aside from the CM's Covid-19 relief fund.

The Central team also visited containment zones in Jogu-palya and Vasanth Nagar in Bengaluru and interacted with locals and health workers. They also inspected the Covid care centre at Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre and the Covid war room at the BBMP head office and directed the local authorities to take up aggressive testing and contact tracing. P7

EMERGING TREND

Symptomatic Covid cases rise sharply in K'taka

RANJANI MADHAVAN @ Bengaluru

IN the seven days between June 29 and July 5, of all the Covid-19 positive cases tested, the ratio of symptomatic patients has increased to 34.5 per cent, while the asymptomatic cases, which were 96% in the first week of June, have reduced to 65.5 per cent, as per state Covid war room data. During this period, 10,824 cases were reported.

A look at the district-wise symptomatic and asymptomatic cases as on July 6 shows some having more symptomatic patients than asymptomatic ones. These include Raichur with 91.7% symptomatic cases, Vijayapura with 87.3%, Dharmawad with 80.5%, Koppal with 60% and Mysuru with 54.7%.

This trend is both an advantage and disadvantage, say experts. "If we look at the pattern of cases this month, there are more patients who have symptoms like headache, body-ache, throat discomfort, loss of taste and smell. These are red flags and alert us. The patients themselves go for check-up and swab test early, thereby getting quarantined sooner," said Dr C N Manjunath, Director of Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, who is the nodal officer for Covid-19 testing in the state. P5

EASY LESSONS

CBSE cuts course load by 30% for Classes 9-12

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) will revise the curriculum and reduce course load for students in Classes 9-12 in the ongoing session by up to 30%, Human Resources Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said on Tuesday.

In a statement, CBSE — the country's largest educational board — said the prevailing health emergency as well as efforts to contain the Covid-19 spread have resulted in loss of classroom teaching. "Therefore, the board has decided to revise the syllabi for Classes 9-12 for the academic session 2020-21," it said.

The board also said that the changes made in the syllabi have been finalised by the respective course committees with the approval of the curriculum committee and governing body of the board. "Considering the importance of achieving the level of learning, the syllabus has been rationalised to the extent possible by retaining the core concepts," it noted.

School heads and teachers must ensure the topics that have been reduced are also explained to the students to the extent required to connect different topics. "However, the reduced syllabus will not be part of the topics for internal assessment and year-end board examination," the board said.



MAKING WAY FOR NEW

Dust from the debris rises over the old Telangana secretariat complex in Hyderabad, after its demolition began on Tuesday | VINAY MADAPU

Studying online? Go back, US tells foreign students

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

THE US said on Monday that foreign students will not be allowed to remain in the country if their classes are going to be held only in the online mode in the upcoming fall semester. The students, however, can stay back if they shift to colleges that teach in-person.

The move will hit many Indian students in the US, apart from those who have secured admission for the fall session beginning in August/September, and also those who had returned to their home countries due to the pandemic.

The number of students who will be impacted could not be ascertained immediately as many colleges haven't decided on the mode of instruction.

"Non-immigrant F-1 and M-1 (visa holders) students attending schools operating entirely online may not take a full online course load and re-

main in the US. Active students currently in the US enrolled in such programs must depart the country or take other measures, such as transferring to a school with in-person instruction to remain in lawful status," US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said.

While the F-1 visa is granted after enrolment in higher education, high school and other levels of education, M-1 visas are issued to those pursuing vocational training.

The announcement came on a day when Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale held virtual talks on enhancing trade and people-to-people ties for students and professionals. According to sources, the US has assured that they will keep the best interests of the students in mind and will try to mitigate the impact. CONTINUED ON: P10

Panel okays digi-classes, lays out guidelines

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA @ Bengaluru

THE Expert Committee on Technology-Enabled Education on Tuesday submitted guidelines for holding online classes for schoolchildren during the Covid-19 pandemic for technology-enabled education and beyond. The report, submitted to the State Government by committee chairman Prof MK Sridhar, recommends a host of solutions for classes from pre-primary to Class 10.

Up to Class 2, classes will be purely interactive — including



play, story-telling, rhymes, etc. The presence of a parent/adult supervisor or their consent is mandatory. Children aged 3-6 years (pre-primary)

will have only 30-minute screen time per session, with a maximum of one session a day for three days a week, while students of Classes 1-2 will have 30 minutes screen time per session with a maximum two sessions a day for three days a week, the committee has recommended.

For Classes 3-5, 30 minutes screen time per session, with a maximum two sessions a day for five days a week has been recommended, while Classes 6-8 will have 30-45 minutes screen time per session with a maximum of three session a

day for five days a week, preferably interactive.

Classes 9-10 can have 30-45 minutes screen time per session with a maximum of four sessions a day for five days a week, with 75% content on the curriculum and the remainder general topics.

For higher primary and high school children, parental presence may not be required. The committee said that if a child is unable to access technology, the school should ensure key learning objectives of that session/module is accessible to the child.